

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1, 3-5, and 8-12 are pending. Claim 1 is amended, and claims 9-12 are added. Claim 1 is independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Examiner Interview

If, during further examination of the present application, a discussion with the Applicants' Representative would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786, at 1-703-208-4030 (direct line) at his convenience.

Drawings

It is gratefully appreciated that the Examiner has accepted the drawings.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged the Applicants' claim for foreign priority based on Japanese Patent Application No. 2003-349596 filed October 8, 2003 and International Application No. PCT/JP2004/014623 filed October 5, 2004.

Information Disclosure Citation

The Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the reference supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 31, 2006, and for providing the Applicants with an initialed copy of the PTO form filed therewith.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 3-5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schiff (U.S. 4,815,689) in view of Galicia (U.S. 2001/0000443).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1

Independent claim 1 has been amended merely to replace the phrase “characterized in that” with “wherein”, thereby presenting the claim in a format more typical of U.S. practice.

Independent claim 1 as originally filed sets forth a combination of elements directed to an integrated mirror including *inter alia*

“coupling means for coupling the inside mirror part and the outside mirror part so that their respective mirror faces are parallel” ...

“the inside mirror part and the outside mirror part are arranged to reflect predetermined regions of the inside field of vision and the outside field of vision, respectively, of behind the vehicle when seen from a virtual view point determined in accordance with a driver’s view point position determined using predetermined physique data, and the inside mirror part and the outside mirror part are disposed at a height above the driver’s view point position”.

The Examiner alleges the combination of Schiff and Galicia is sufficient to teach the present invention. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Regarding Schiff

The Examiner concedes that Schiff fails to disclose the inside mirror part and the outside mirror part are disposed at a height above the driver's view point position.

Regarding Galicia

As for Galicia, this document discloses a completely different arrangement. First of all, Galicia explicitly teaches that mirror 11, 12, 18, and 19 are separately adjustable around horizontal and vertical axes for the purpose of eliminating a blind spot on the driver's side of the vehicle. (See page 8). Further, as is apparent for FIG. 2A of Galicia, the mirrors are not arranged so as to provide a virtual view point as determined in accordance with the driver's view point position. (See FIG. 2A, for example.)

Therefore, it is apparent that the Galicia apparatus is aimed at addressing a different problem than that of the present inventors. Galicia teaches arranging the angles of the mirrors to eliminate a blind spot.

However, as indicated in FIG. 9 of the present invention, for example, the blind spot 36 is NOT eliminated in the present invention. Instead, as can be seen in FIG. 9, the present invention is aimed at providing a virtual view point as determined in accordance with the driver's view point position. This is only possible with mirrors that are parallel to each other, which are absent in Galicia.

The Examiner refers to Galicia FIG. 7, which shows separately adjustable mirrors 11, 12, on the same horizontal line 73 as the center view mirror. While this allows a driver's eyes to scan along a single horizontal line, the Galicia mirrors are not parallel to each other,

and three overlapping rear views are provided to the driver. Since Galicia teaches non-parallel mirrors in each and every one of the embodiments, Galicia “**teaches away**” from the present invention.

Moreover, while Examiner asserts on page 3 of the Office Action that “the center rear view mirror ... is generally understood in art to be above a driver’s view point”, the Examiner has provided NO evidence that one skilled in the art would arrange the parallel mirrors of the present invention at the level of the center rearview mirror 72” of Galicia FIG.

7. Certainly, primary reference Schiff provides no suggestion of this.

In addition, even if, for the sake of argument, the parallel mirrors of the present invention were arranged at the same level as center rear view mirror 72 of Galicia, there is no explicit teaching that this level meets the requirements of the present invention, namely that “the inside mirror part and the outside mirror part are disposed at a height above the driver’s view point position”. Galicia provides no teaching of “a height above the driver’s view point position”.

In view of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has fail to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness in his rejection. Galicia fails to make up for the admitted deficiency of Schiff.

At least for the reasons explained above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Schiff and Galicia.

Therefore, independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 9-12 have been added to set forth additional novel features of the invention.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

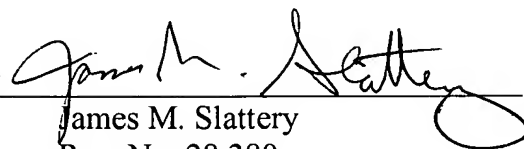
All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030 (direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Dated: August 27, 2008

Respectfully submitted,
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